

Stress, Burnout & Recovery

Recognizing overload early and rebuilding capacity before exhaustion becomes the only signal to stop.

Stress vs. burnout

Stress often feels like “too much.” Burnout may feel like “nothing left.” Common signs include exhaustion, cynicism, irritability, reduced effectiveness, sleep changes, emotional numbing, dread, and withdrawal.

Capacity drains

- Chronic workload without recovery time.
- High responsibility with low control.
- Repeated exposure to conflict, trauma, or emotional labor.
- Perfectionism, difficulty delegating, or feeling responsible for everyone else.
- Poor sleep, skipped meals, substance use, or loss of restorative activities.

Recovery skills

- Reduce nonessential demands before trying to “optimize” yourself.
- Protect small recovery periods during the day, not only vacations.
- Reconnect with activities that restore a sense of identity outside work.
- Set boundaries around availability and responsibility.
- Use values to decide what deserves energy rather than giving equal urgency to everything.

Therapy can help

Therapy can help address perfectionism, chronic guilt, trauma exposure, boundary difficulties, relationship strain, and patterns that make rest feel unsafe or undeserved.

Try this reflection

Which demand could be reduced, delayed, delegated, or done “good enough” this week?

Using this resource: For education and skill-building only; not diagnosis, medical advice, or crisis care. If you feel overwhelmed, pause and seek appropriate professional support. In the U.S., call or text 988 for crisis support; call 911 for an immediate emergency.